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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/498,369	02/04/2000	Victor H. Shear	07451.0010-01000	8725

7590 12/19/2001

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EXAMINER

DIXON, THOMAS A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2161

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

SR

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/498,369

Applicant(s)

SHEAR ET AL.

Examiner

Thomas A. Dixon

Art Unit

2161

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 November 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 2-136 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 136-185 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_. 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

1. Claims 142-145 appear to be dependent upon claim 141, as 141 is a method and claims 142-145 are directed to a method, while claim 140, from which they say they nominally depend, is an apparatus claim. Dependency from claim 141 will be assumed.

***Election/Restrictions***

2. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention: see groups I-XI below.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claim 1 is generic.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record

Art Unit: 2161

showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

3. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claim 1, drawn to a method of classifying and matching users and content, classified in class 705, subclass 1.
- II. Claims 136-140, drawn to a system for classifying and matching, classified in class 705, subclass 1.
- III. Claims 141-145, drawn to a method of classifying and matching including a third party, classified in class 705, subclass 53.
- IV. Claims 146-150, drawn to a method of classifying and matching with usage monitoring, classified in class 705, subclass 52.
- V. Claims 151-155, drawn to a method of creating a secure container with digital certificates, classified in class 705, subclass 67.
- VI. Claims 156-160, drawn to a <sup>method</sup>~~system~~ <sub>8/5/14/02</sub> for of classifying and matching with usage monitoring and digital certificates, classified in class 705, subclass ~~67~~ <sub>52</sub>.
- VII. Claims 161-165, drawn to a system for creating communications with digital certificates, classified in class 705, subclass 76.

- VIII. Claims 166-170, drawn to a network with vertical markets, classified in class 705, subclass 14.
- IX. Claims 171-175, drawn to a method for classifying, matching and generating a secure package, classified in class 705, subclass 54.
- X. Claims 176-180, drawn to generation of a secure container, classified in class 705, subclass 53.
- XI. Claims 181-185, drawn to distribution of secure containers to multiple parties, classified in class 705, subclass 50.

4. Inventions III, IV, VII-XI are related as combination and subcombination.

Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the methods can be used together or separately. The subcombination has separate utility such as a secure container generator, a matching engine with secure container, a usage monitoring and vertical market prediction system, and a clearinghouse method and system.

5. Inventions I and II, and V and VI are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process.

Art Unit: 2161

(MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the method of Invention II can be materially performed by hand rather than by the claimed apparatus of Invention I.

6. Inventions V and VI are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the method of Invention V can be materially performed by hand rather than by the claimed apparatus of Invention VI.

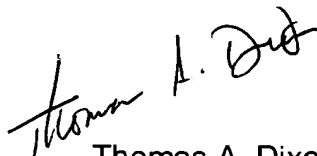
7. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas A. Dixon whose telephone number is (703) 305-4645. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 6:30 - 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on (703) 305-9768. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7293 for regular communications and (703) 746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.



Thomas A. Dixon  
Examiner  
Art Unit 2161

December 12, 2001